

Vinyl Party spins Music, Ambiance, Love ? and horses ? for Heritage Week kick-off

Aurora's music history will be spun throughout Aurora Town Square on Monday as historian David Heard and his Dave's Vinyl Party take residents on a unique musical journey to mark the start of Heritage Week.

Heard, who is a familiar face throughout the community, and particularly during the summer where he spins a curated vinyl playlist at the Aurora Farmers' Market, has long been an advocate for the benefits analogue music has for the mind, body, and soul, and has translated this passion in new ways for the heritage program.

Heritage Week begins at Aurora Town Square on Monday, February 16, and throughout the day, Heard will present ?Music, Ambiance, Love and Heritage? in the Aurora Town Square café. Nearby, Heard will showcase A Tribute to the Aurora Horse Show, which is very much in keeping with the musical theme; as is Aurora's Connection to The Beatles' Sgt. Pepper, a unique display Heard will present on Aurora Town Square's second floor.

?February is a tough month for a lot of people ? the weather's been exceptionally cold, the world is a little tilted on its axis with all the conflicts going on, and it is stressful for a lot of people,? says Heard. ?It's not just that I'm excited about celebrating Aurora's heritage, it's because of the timing. People need something like this and I think it's absolutely wonderful it launches this weekend with Valentine's Day on a Saturday and Family Day weekend stuff going on. You've got Arctic Adventure going on, but maybe some people can't do the outdoors, maybe they have mobility challenges ? now there's Town Square. There's a lot of stuff going on, so Aurora's going to be a really happening place this weekend!?

Heard's interest in Aurora's heritage runs deep and encompasses many of its facets, but when he brainstormed what he could bring to the Heritage Week program, he said his first choice was an easy one: illustrating Aurora's connection to the Beatles' iconic album Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band.

?It's always a powerful story for people, the lore of the OPP patch on Paul McCartney's shoulder and everything, so I thought it would be a great way to just do a visual display,? he says, noting the display includes a replica of the costume in question.

With Valentine's Day on Saturday, the second element he wanted to bring to the table was also clear: a curated collection of love songs ? but not just the ballads. Expect funk, reggae, rock, and more.

?I'm spinning a marathon from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., no repeats, and I can guarantee you that there are going to be people bopping through Town Square,? he says. ?I pride myself in making enhanced spaces with what I do. I don't crank the music, I just set myself up in a nice little corner and the music just emanates through the whole building.

?The third one is very special to me. The number-one thing when I've gone out and done speaking engagements or walking tours, or on my social media, the thing that people really get most excited about is the memories of the Aurora Horse Show. I have some photographs of thousands and thousands of people just packing the hills watching world-class riders. We were the last stop every four years before the Olympics, and really the world was watching because we had riders from England, Brazil, Mexico and Iran. There were dog shows, baking contests, it was community ? and every summer, that's what we looked for.?

So, how does the history of the Aurora Horse Show mesh with Dave's vinyl?

A 100 square foot mural, set to be assembled in the Aurora Town Square café space, encompassing more than 100 individual albums featuring horses in their cover art.

If you can correctly guess ? or count ? the number of individual horses depicted in the mural, there just might be a prize in the offing!

?With my musical displays, I'm trying to create an environment where it distracts from the distractions of the busy world we're in, whether it be the digital world or maybe something someone's struggling with in their life,? he says. ?I've struggled a lot and I can tell you, I know this collection has, without a doubt, saved my life. I thought, why would I be the only one that would be impacted if I can come up with unique programming?

?People are struggling right now, whether it be economically, emotionally. It's been a horrible, horrible, cold winter. I guess the love program says it all. I just want to bring a little love to Aurora, a little bit of a positive distraction.?

?I love heritage, and I love music ? and Aurora's okay too!? he continues with a chuckle. ?I just want to bring it, and I hope people will bring themselves and take it in, and let's just forget about the world for a few hours and be a community.?

For more on Aurora's Heritage Week, visit aurora.ca/heritageweek.

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